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# A Trip to the South America Indian Mission Fields

By The General Director, Joseph A. Davis

AFTER a trip to the field Mrs. Davis and I have arrived back in the U. S. A.; but we left part of ourselves in South America. When one is away from the field as long as we have been, the spirit of active missionary life and the sense of everyday missionary experiences need to be renewed. We spent all too short a time but every moment was precious and revived and recalled earlier times when we were ourselves missionaries in the same fields. God bless and keep those devoted workers, every one.

At our first stop in Cuiaba, Brazil, the Rev. C. Thomas Young, Rev. Robert Meader, Rev. Raymond Ross, and Rev. Ernest Lubkemann were the members of the Brazilian Field Committee present for administration conferences. At the larger Bible Conferences there were also the Rev. and Mrs. William Wiley, Miss Mildred Pierce, and Rev. and Mrs. Oliver Price. We greatly missed Rev. and Mrs. Charles Harmon, Mrs. Meader, Mrs. Young, Mrs. Lubkemann, Mrs. Ross, Miss Cameron and Miss Moulton, who were unable to be present and had to stay behind at various stations to keep things together.

Cuiaba is a city of forty thousand situated at the geographical center of South America. Traveling by plane we had no trouble getting there but it is a long distance from Sao Paulo

by railroad and steamer. It is the supply station and center from which goods are gotten for the Nhambiquara and Xingu sections. We have an adequate (rented) Mission Home there, ably run by Rev. and Mrs. William Wiley at present. When Rev. and Mrs. Emil W. Halverson return to the field they have been asked to take charge of the home, to handle business matters and to carry on missionary work in the environs. Mr. Halverson will be a permanent member of the language committee, a member at large of the Brazilian Field Committee and will be appointed by the General Director, deputy Field Treasurer. Mr. Halverson went to the field in 1922 and Mrs. Halverson in 1929. Their long experience will be a great help and blessing to new missionaries and their counsel a service of strength and stability to those out in the jungles where they themselves have spent so much of their lives.

### Southern Matto Grosso

Our Brazilian Field is divided into three districts: Southern Matto Grosso, Xingu and Nhambiquara sections. In Southern Matto Grosso the main stations are Bananal and Aquidauana. Bananal is our oldest station, being started about thirty years ago. It has an active church and a good church building in the Indian reservation. At the edge of the reservation (two or three miles distant) are the station homes (three buildings). Two day schools have been maintained for years but have been recently closed by governmental orders. There are hopes of reopening them. Two other schools on a smaller scale are now

being taught by Miss Christine Cameron and Miss Evelyn Moulton. In addition to the central church there are several strong outstations with native workers helping and Rev. Raymond E. Ross in charge. Miss Cameron went to the field in 1919 and is known lovingly to the natives as "Grandma." She has brought into the world many of their children and has taught many more and is held in highest esteem by the Terenas. Miss Moulton went to the field in 1943, has studied nursing, and is in demand both as a nurse and as a school teacher. She does the work of two persons, quietly and efficiently. Mr. Ross went to the field in 1936 and Mrs. Ross in 1939. He has had jungle experience among the Xinguanos and is now in charge of Bananal and as Chairman of the Southern Matto Grosso Committee, also in charge of Aquidauana. Each week he spends three or more days on horseback visiting outstations. A motor car is greatly needed for this territory.

There is a fine church in the village of Aquidauana and outside of the town is the prospective Bible Institute. Fourteen hundred dollars is still needed to complete the purchase of this property. It consists of thirty-nine acres and various buildings. It is now in charge of a caretaker and will be reopened as funds permit. It will train young men as native pastors and evangelists. Bananal and Aquidauana are strong centers and Mr. Ross has worked untiringly in developing them and keeping them operating. Several more couples are urgently needed for this district for teaching and evangelistic work. The opportunities

for service will be limited only by the strength and consecration of new volunteers.

### Xingu District

Nearly twenty years ago, Rev. and Mrs. Emil W. Halverson opened the work at Rio Paranatinga which is two to three hundred miles east and north of Cuiaba. They reached their destination on horses and with oxen. A beginning was made with the Bacairis, formerly wild Indians but now gathered around the almost inaccessible government outpost at the Rio Paranatinga. As a result of their labor there is now a church and a building and the Gospel has been preached adequately to these Indians. Later Mr. Halverson led Mr. L. L. Legters on a survey trip to the headwaters of the Xingu River and particularly to the Kuluene and the Kuriseu Rivers which are parts of the sources of the Xingu. Still later when Rev. and Mrs. C. Thomas Young joined the Halversons a station was started right in the jungles under Mr. and Mrs. Young, pioneers of the quality and caliber of other famous missionaries.

This region is fabled in fanciful tales as the location of the lost El Dorado, as the habitat of white Indians, as a place into which Colonel Fawcett and party disappeared, and of other tales. The Youngs and later Rev. Raymond Ross for a time, lived in this district and started to evangelize these Indians. Then the Brazilian Government ordered them to leave the interior and reluctantly and tearfully they were obliged to cease temporarily their efforts. Their endeavors were heroic ones; they en-

dured almost indescribable hardships and yet made friends with the Indians. For some time efforts have been made to return. Mr. Young and Mr. Lubkemann will make a trip to these regions in the coming months. The officials of Brazil assured me personally when I was in Cuiaba that neither they nor we had yet contacted two thirds of the Indian world of these regions. They believe that to the north and east and west of Cuiaba there are still thousands and thousands of Indians unreached by the white man.

The government officials are not Protestants and do not believe in our religion, they state, but do respect our work. I was told by one of the highest of them that if he had not been obliged to order the Youngs out of the Xingu the Indians there would be today much better off. He felt he had had to obey the laws in not letting outsiders into Indian territory unless there is a government station there first; but he regretted the necessity. He also stated that the work of Mrs. Wiley (nee Marjorie Clark) had prevented the extinction of the Bacairis from malaria. She, he stated, had stamped out malaria and the tribe was still living and increasing when otherwise they would otherwise surely have died off.

The Youngs are now in charge of Rio Paranatinga as a jumping off place for advance into the Xingu. They have as co-workers, Rev. and Mrs. Ernest Lubkemann. The Lubkemanns, after a seasoning and acclimatizing in Southern Matto Grosso at Aquidauana and Aquidauana Bible School, have joined the Youngs for this advance into the Xingu. There

are some ten tribes waiting for a renewal of Gospel preaching. The Lubkemanns are physically, mentally and spiritually equipped for such a work.

### Nhambiquara Land

Though this work was originally projected in 1927, it was temporarily interrupted through the martyrdom of Arthur Francis Tylee, baby Marion and Miss Mildred Kratz. The workers there now are aggressively reaching out with the Gospel to the various tribes under the general name of Nhambiquaras. Rev. and Mrs. Charles Harmon are at Campos Novos, four weeks and more north and west from Cuiaba. There they are alone and have worked prodigously under the most trying conditions and with good results as we judge Indian work.

When this noble couple comes out of the jungle in September to go home on furlough the Campos Novos station will have to be closed for lack of workers. To this work Rev. and Mrs. Winfield Buckman and Rev. G. Dudley Kinsman have given their lives as well as the Harmons. These last three (now home on furlough) though younger in experience than the Harmons stand on an equality with them in missionary qualities.

Half way between Cuiaba and Campos Novos is Utiarity, where the Rev. and Mrs. Robert Meader are stationed. They reach three tribes of the Nhambiquaras. They are working on the language and Mr. Meader makes trips to the Indian villages as opportunity permits. They have made progress in the language

study and are experienced Indian workers. Around the main station, Indians gather from time to time, staying for a few weeks and then returning to their villages. It seems almost incredible that with such opportunities among the Nhambiquaras and Xinguanos and with thousands of other Indians yet unapproached that there can be so few missionary volunteers. The work is hard but there are many thousands who have not heard one word of the Gospel and our command is: "Go ye."

### New Assignments

Rev. and Mrs. Charles Harmon were granted furlough to begin in September. Rev. and Mrs. Ernest Lubkemann were granted furlough to commence as soon as he has returned from the trip to the Xingu with Mr. Young. Miss Christine Cameron was granted furlough to commence in July. Miss Evelyn Moulton was granted furlough to commence this summer as and when finances permit. These necessary furloughs will further reduce the field force.

Rev. and Mrs. William Wiley were assigned to the Xingu after the return of the Halversons. Miss Mildred Pierce was assigned to Utiarity. Rev. and Mrs. Oliver W. Price were assigned to Southern Matto Grosso on the passing of their language tests. Rev. and Mrs. Richard DeLong and Rev. and Mrs. Clarence V. Snyder, new missionaries, are expected to arrive in Brazil June 4. When all assigned to Brazil are on the field there are only twenty-six missionaries for these great tasks. To occupy present stations adequately and to

carry out present plans of necessary new contacts, a minimum of forty missionaries are needed.

### Daily Routine

As a sample of daily life Cuiaba will serve as an example of what happened at all our stations on my visit.

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| 6:00 A.M. | We were awakened by trumpet gospel solos by Bill Wiley. |
| 6:30 A.M. | Breakfast and devotions. |
| 9:00 A.M. | Morning session of Bible Study conducted by General Director and all missionaries present. |
| 11:00 A.M. | Personal interviews. |
| 12:00 | Lunch. |
| 2:00 P.M. | Afternoon business meeting of Brazil Field Committee with General Director. |
| 5:30 P.M. | Dinner. |
| 7:00 P.M. | Night Bible Study. |
| 9:00 P.M. | Recreation. |
| 10:00 P.M. | Bed. |

A Meinaco Indian out at the Paranatinga station had heard I was coming to Cuiaba. He spent over a week fashioning the necklace of "big chief" and was to have traveled to Cuiaba to present me with this and induct me into the tribe. Due to traveling conditions he was unable to come but sent the necklace in with Brother Tom Young who acted in his stead. I felt greatly honored that these Indians so loved and respected our missionaries

that they would convey this token of respect to one of their officers.

## Bolivia

Rev. C. Ray Frazier met me in Corumba and we traveled the rest of the way to Robore together. At Robore I was met by Rev. and Mrs. George Haight, Rev. Frank Pickering, Rev. William Hammond and Miss Evelyn Davies. Soon we were on our way in a Ford truck, up the mountain loaded down with all kinds of passengers,—maybe fifteen—assorted baggage and freight. The ride was a wild one. They called it a road. I do not know how the automobile stayed on it or got over it. That automobile was some mountain goat. The engine shrieked and whined and screamed like a lost soul in "inferno." The truck lurched from side to side and often seemed about to turn over. It hit boulders and stones the size of small watermelons as if that was what it was built for. When a rock was just too large it stopped, backed and crawled over it. Well, we got there and I didn't need any "daily dozen" for days. I had had all the exercises inside and out I could take.

Santiago is a lovely place and under the leadership of Rev. George Haight, has been built into a great missionary station and center. There is a building more or less a block square right on the plaza of this small town with patio and yards enclosed inside the building. There are two extra buildings for missionary families; and in addition a very fine church building. Then there is the farm and the leagues of ground at Aqua Suscio

among the savages. The day and boarding school had been closed by government order but it was being reopened. The church was flourishing. A Bible Institute is planned and the program for it is in the making. The savage work is temporarily at a standstill due to local conditions and especially to the lack of workers. In all the country round Mr. Haight is esteemed as an able administrator and fine Christian gentleman. He started the work in Bolivia nineteen years ago. When we got to the mission house we met Miss Alys Aldering and Miss Elizabeth Green and a few hours later Rev. William Pencille who rode on horseback from Santo Corazon.

We had the same program as in Brazil, that is, Bible Conferences twice a day and business once a day with the Bolivian Field Committee. As I listened to the reports of work that had been accomplished, of work being done and of work planned for, my heart thrilled within me. But again there were the pleas for workers. How they are needed!

At Santiago they can not carry on their program unless there is help. Mr. and Mrs. Haight have to come home on furlough after 6 years of grueling work and the whole burden will fall on Rev. and Mrs. Ray Frazier, who will be left in charge with Miss Alys Aldering and Miss Elizabeth Green as co-workers. Capable and able and consecrated as all these are they must have help. There must be new couples for Santiago if the work is to be carried on as planned. In addition Mr. Haight feels confident that if he could have ten single young men for two years he

could reach the savage Indians and establish permanent stations among them.

And what of the rest of lower Bolivia? Santo Corazon, a promising station in a small town on the edge of another Indian section, has to be closed temporarily because the Pencilles have been assigned to the larger station of Concepcion while Rev. and Mrs. William Hammond come home on furlough. Mrs. Hammond's health demands medical attention of the kind only obtainable in the United States. Concepcion not only administers to the people of the town but to surrounding villages. Mr. Hammond makes his rounds in a truck and with the consecrated help of Mrs. Hammond and the able and effective aid of Miss Evelyn Davies does the work of many. At their door are great Indian tribes of strange but friendly peoples. Heretofore these Indians were set off in reservations. No one could go to them. Within a few months the government has opened their villages, placing them under the administration of the Cacique (chief) and of the local Bolivian official. They are absolutely unevangelized. There are forty thousand Indians waiting for the Gospel and no one to take to them the Word of God. If there were several more missionary couples, where could a greater opportunity be found? A whole province (state), crowded with Indians, for a parish. Who will observe and answer. "Come over and help us" is the cry. Who will hear?

Miss Janet Briggs, now working with the Pencilles effectively in the to be closed station of Santo Corazon and an efficient laborer, is

the only one in sight to help immediately. But she is needed in other places in Bolivia.

Another great province beckons to workers. At San Ignacio de Velasco Rev. and Mrs. Frank M. Pickering are entirely alone with much the same situation and with many of the same opportunities as in the neighboring provinces. Towns and villages of Indians, and of mixed bloods, are unreached because of the lack of workers. The Pickerings are laying down their lives for the work and praying night and day for needed assistants. The Pickerings are among our oldest missionaries but they can not cover such a vast territory and should have more co-workers. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will thrust forth laborers for the fields are white, ready for harvest.

### Peru

Due to limited time and prevailing travel conditions the Peruvian committee met with me in Lima. Rev. Erwin H. Lauriault, Rev. Bertis L. Watson, Rev. George Baker and James Lauriault, were present but had to leave behind Mrs. Lauriault, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Roach.

The Lauriaults are at Roaboya on the Rio Ucayali, one of the sources of the Amazon. Their station is among the Shipibos, one of the branches of the great Pano people. Both Mr. Lauriault and James have done outstanding work in mastering this Indian tongue and James speaks and preaches fluently in Shipibo. All about them are other sections to which they wish to extend the work of this Shipibo

church. Again the lack of workers. At present they are seeking to purchase the land round about them to prevent the encroachment of Peruvians inimical to the best interests of the Indians and to the gospel. They are praying for six hundred dollars to buy this large tract of land.

James has been assigned for a month or two to help the Watsons at Cahuapanas with difficulties in the Campa tongue. This young missionary has become an expert linguistic through studies at Wycliffe, through natural talent and through his field experiences as he has lived all his life among Indians.

Rev. Bertis L. Watson presented the situation at Cahaupanas. In the absence of Rev. and Mrs. William R. Hurley who, after ten years of straight service, are home on furlough, the Watsons are alone in the midst of an Indian empire of ten to twenty thousand Campas Indians. Here are opportunities that require several additional couples. At Cahuapanas there is a little church, a school, a store and a farm. There are just two people to attend to all of this. Where are the thousands that graduate yearly from our Bible Institutes and seminaries?

Rev. and Mrs. George Baker have been at Contamana (fifty miles from the Lauriaults) for about one year. When their probationary two years are up (February 1949) they have applied to transfer to Caco and to open a new work among the Indians there. This would leave Contamana in charge of native workers. We have a church and property at Contamana. All these fields and the paucity of workers

stagger one's sense of proportion; but God is able.

Mrs. Hannah Roach is doing valiant service at Calleria. Living with reliable natives she has been able to initiate and to carry on effectively in spite of being a woman in an Indian country. God has blessed her with converts and she conducts a day school in this far away place. We thank God for Mrs. Roach.

Six more couples in Peru would relieve some of this tension and even make a start to expand to places and to peoples from whom invitations have been received to send missionaries and teachers. Peru! What a need and what a challenge!

### Colombia

Our last stop was at Rio Hacha, Colombia. There we were met by Rev. and Mrs. William Thompson, Rev. Henry Strube, Rev. and Mrs. Roy True, Rev. and Mrs. Hunter Norwood, and Luis Thompson. Rev. and Mrs. Orland Corwin and Mrs. Strube could not be present.

We stayed at the home of the Trues which is a rented house about large enough to start the new Colombia Bible Institute. The Field Committee has recommended this project and it has been endorsed by the Home Board. They will need $600.00 extra a year to run, and $1,400.00 to buy land and start the erection of the necessary quarters for the students after the first year. The Trues were engaged in this kind of work among the Navajos of New Mexico before they went out to our field. They are equipped by experience, education

and ability to carry forward successfully.

Rio Hacha is a small town of five thousand people, in Magdalena province on the edge of the Goajira Peninsula. This peninsula is the home and reservation of some forty thousand Goajira Indians. The Indians cross over and walk the streets of Rio Hacha, the men practically naked but for loin clothes, and the women clothed in a long garment similar to the old fashioned "Mother Hubbards" of another day. The remainder of the population of Rio Hacha is a mixture of Indians, Negroes and Colombians.

Rev. and Mrs. William E. Thompson devote five or more months of each year to the evangelizing of the Goajira Indians out in the reservation at a place called Manaure. The rest of the year they continue the same work in Rio Hacha. Mr. Thompson has translated the Gospel of Mark into Goajira and is going forward with new translations. He will also be a member of the faculty of the new school. He is the chairman of the Colombia Field Committee, and was our first missionary to Colombia, sailing in 1934.

Rev. and Mrs. Hunter Norwood are in charge of the local church and Sunday School in Rio Hacha. The Church and the Norwoods are making a real impression on the town. Some of the members of the Church are substantial and outstanding citizens. Mr. Norwood will be a member of the faculty of the Bible Institute.

Two more couples are absolutely needed to keep things going in Rio Hacha as the school starts. The influence of these Bible students

on all of the Goajira and on Magdalena province will be very effective in the spreading of the Gospel.

Out in the hinterland Rev. and Mrs. Henry Strube have operated from headquarters in Carraipià and reached many towns and villages as well as groups in the country round about. They are being transferred to Fonseca which the Trues have just left and leave behind them an organized church and a strong group of believers. At Fonseca the Strubes will continue their enthusiastic and successful evangelistic work. Mr. Strube uses sound amplification and every practical modern device to get his messages across.

Rev. and Mrs. Orland Corwin at Atanquez among the Aruacs are progressing both in language work and in the spreading of the Word in this remote field. They are the only ones witnessing for Christ to these mountain Indians. These parts of Colombia need recruits as well as Rio Hacha. Colombia is a country of opportunity. Volunteers for missionary work there will find opportunities to spend their lives for Christ as witnesses in great sections in which there are no other workers and in which they will be able to hear the voice of the Lord "Lo, I am with you always."

I would say much more but space forbids. My own heart burns within me at the open doors within South America. People calling, sections sending invitations, and so few Isaiahs who reply "Here am I, send me." Will you not pray and send others or go yourself?

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